

GOING DEEP



Thirteenth Sunday
after Pentecost
SEPTEMBER 14, 2025
9:30 & 11:00 A.M



ATHENS FIRST UMC

The Worship of God

*Please stand as you are able. The congregation speaks the text in **bold** type.

Large print hymnals are available in the Narthex. Please ask a member of our Welcome Team for assistance.



THE FLOWERS IN THE CHURCH ARE GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD

In loving memory of Virginia Whitehead by Anne Whitehead Garner and Bob Whitehead.

GATHERING

The Prelude

“Pastorale on a Celtic Alleluia” | Richard Proulx

Raina Wood, Organist

The Welcome and Opening Prayer | Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby

The Choral Call to Worship

“Louez Le Seigneur” | CAMEROON PROCESSIONAL

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir; Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship

Translation from French: *Praise the Lord! Praise God’s holy name, Alleluia!*

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 529 “How Firm a Foundation” | FOUNDATION

**The Morning Prayer* | Howard Thurman

Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart. Here is the citadel of all my desiring, where my hopes are born and all the resolutions of my spirit take wings. In this center, my fears are nourished, and all my hates are nurtured. Here, my loves are cherished, and all the deep hungers of my spirit are honored without quivering and without shock. In my heart, above all else, let love and integrity envelop me until my love is perfected and the last vestige of my desiring is no longer in conflict with thy Spirit. Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart. Amen.

**The Gloria Patri* | MEINEKE

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

**The Passing of the Peace*

The Sacrament of Baptism | 9:30 a.m.

Robert Wooten Brown, son of Maggie and Will Brown

Robert, Robert, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too. We this day do all agree a child of God you'll always be. Robert, Robert, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too.

The Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer | Rev. Dr. Nancy Johnson

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen. Amen.

The Hymn

UMH 402 “Lord, I Want to Be a Christian” | I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN

During the singing of the hymn at 11:00 a.m., children grades Kindergarten through grade four are dismissed through the front, lectern side doors to attend Children’s Church. They can be picked up at the conclusion of worship in Hancock Hall.

The Stewardship Moment

The Offering and Offertory Anthem

“God’s Grace, All Sufficient” | Margaret R. Tucker

Rung by the Athens First Ringers with Rachael Fischer, violin

Erin Towe, Music Program Assistant

**The Doxology* | LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia!

Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

PROCLAMATION

The Scripture Reading | Luke 2:22-38; Romans 8:26-27

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.**

The Message | Rev. Jeremy Lawson

“Too Deep for Words”

RESPONSE

**The Hymn of Response*

UMH 419 "I Am Thine, O Lord" | I AM THINE

**The Blessing*

**The Choral Benediction* | Philip Stopford

May the road rise to meet you. May the wind be ever at your back. May the sun shine warm up on your face; the rains fall soft down up on your fields. And until we meet again, and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.

**The Postlude*

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" | Timothy Albrecht

THE STEEPLE

September 14, 2025



Wellroot Special Offering | September 21

We will take up a Special Offering on **Sunday, September 21**, for Wellroot Family Services. For more than 150 years, Wellroot Family Services (our United Methodist Children's Home) has relied on the support of local churches to care for children and families in need. By participating in the conference-wide special offering, you become FAMILY to those we serve. You become FAMILY for a child in foster care. You become FAMILY for a teen who is reshaping their future. You become FAMILY for a new mom building a support system. You become FAMILY for parents striving for wholeness and healing with their children.



New Member Sunday | September 21

You're invited to join our Athens First United Methodist Church community! If you've been considering becoming a member, we would love to welcome you. Our next Membership Sunday will be on **September 21**, a special opportunity to take the next step in your faith journey through your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Whether you're new to the area or have been attending for a while, know that we would love to welcome you into membership.

If you're interested in learning more, please contact Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby for more information about our membership process.

Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby, Associate Minister
natalee@athensfirstumc.org



Piano Concertos of Rachmaninoff and Grieg September 21 | 3:00 p.m.

Virtuoso husband-and-wife piano and organ duo, Chuyoung Suter and Erik William Suter, will kick off our season with a tour-de-force program: Edvard Grieg's Piano Concerto and Sergei Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2. In this afternoon concert, Erik will bring Grieg's orchestral score to life at the Quimby Sanctuary Organ, while Chuyoung performs the stunning piano solos, and after intermission, they will switch places—with Chuyoung at the organ and Erik at the piano! Graduates of the Yale School of Music and Yale Institute of Sacred Music and former musicians of Washington National Cathedral, this duo will offer an inspiring start to the season you won't want to miss. *Reception in Hancock Hall following the recital.*

Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship | ryan@athensfirstumc.org



Third Grade Bibles Sunday | September 28

One of our most exciting milestones is when children receive their very own Bible from their church family. This Bible represents our church's care for our youngest disciples, helping them begin their journey of better understanding God's word and developing a personal relationship with God. We will celebrate this special morning with our Third Graders and their families during the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service. Immediately following the service, our third graders and their parents/guardians are invited to gather in Hancock Hall for a delicious lunch and a fun "How to Use Your New Bible" workshop led by one of our wonderful clergy. Childcare and lunch will be provided for siblings. Please be sure to register by scanning the QR code in The Steeple.

Traci Lowry, Director of Kids at Athens First | traci@athensfirstumc.org



College and Young Adults | UNITED Night September 28 | 7:00 p.m.

College Students and Young Adults are invited to join us for worship **on Sunday, September 28, at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel.** UNITED Nights are our monthly worship nights that include college and young adult-led worship, a relevant message for our lives, and conclude together at the Communion table. Come UNITE with our young adults at Athens First! **Upcoming nights are October 12, November 16, and December 7 at 7:00 p.m.**

Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby, Associate Minister
natalee@athensfirstumc.org



Consecration Sunday | October 5

On **Sunday, October 5**, we'll celebrate Consecration Sunday, a day where we offer praise and thanksgiving for God's gifts and in return consecrate our gifts—our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness—to the Glory of God. Together, we will share in a beautiful morning of worship with Holy Communion, the opportunity to bring our 2026 pledge cards forward, and a churchwide celebration after both services on North Lumpkin Street in front of the sanctuary.



BICENTENNIAL *prayer focus* — SEPTEMBER | THE RESURRECTION

Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!

Luke 24:5-6

Luke 24:5-6 and Matthew 28:5-6 | Hymnal: 302 and 321

SERMON NOTES:



SEPTEMBER 17: Ribs served with mac-n-cheese and baked beans.

Register by noon on Tuesday | Scan the Steeple QR Code to register online or Call the Church Office.

COUNTRY WESTERN NIGHT!

FINANCIAL REPORT | As of September 7, 2025 (finance@athensfirstumc.org):

2025 YTD Giving Goal: \$2,331,144 | YTD Actual Giving: \$2,177,083 | YTD Actual Expenses: \$2,254,129

WAYS TO GIVE



OFFERING PLATE:

Fill out the envelope located in your pew.



ONLINE:

Scan to be taken to Realm, our online giving platform.



TEXT-TO-GIVE:

Text "AFUMCTTG" to 73256.

FOLLOW UP WITH A MINISTER

Rev. Jeremy Lawson | Senior Minister
jeremy@athensfirstumc.org | 404-304-3574

Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby | Associate Minister
natalee@athensfirstumc.org | 404-414-1701

Rev. Montana Hamby | Associate Minister
montana@athensfirstumc.org | 770-633-3140

Rev. Dr. Nancy Johnson | Associate Minister
nancy@athensfirstumc.org | 762-233-4761

REQUEST PRAYER | Have a prayer request? Scan the QR code located in your bulletin and select "Needing Prayer" to fill out a form to submit your prayer request. If you desire for the request to be shared with our Prayer Ministry team, please indicate that in your submission. Prayer requests can also be made directly via email prayer@athensfirstumc.org.

CCS #12591 • CCLI #1097880

ATHENS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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